

SAMOAN HEAD HUNTERS.

Renewal of the Barbarous Practice During Recent Troubles.

Native Troops Cut Off the Heads of Girls as Well as Men and Place Them at the Feet of Their King.

There was a renewal of the practice of "head-hunting" in Samoa during the recent troubles between the partisans of Mafetia and of Mataafa; and upon the occasion, in violation of old Samoan customs, the heads of girls, as well as of men, were taken by the native troops engaged to fight for the triple protectorate which exists under the authority of the British, German, and American governments. By advices received in Washington from spies a short time ago, says a recent dispatch, it was learned that an attempt to put a stop to the practice had been made by the American jurist, Mr. Ide, of Vermont, who was last year appointed to the office of chief justice of Samoa, but the attempt was unsuccessful, as it was not sustained by the resident consuls. When the government troops went out to fight Mataafa's people in the rebellion of this year he warned them that they would be punished if they indulged in the practice of head hunting; and yet, notwithstanding, as soon as hostilities were begun the head hunters broke loose, and when they returned from the field they brought with them the heads of their victims, which were laid at the feet of the king with the knowledge of the foreign consuls serving under the protectorate. On account of the peculiar circumstances of the case Chief Justice Ide found himself unable to measure out the punishment which he had threatened to inflict. The ruling authorities would give him no assistance; the offenders could not be identified. The native warriors disregarded his warning; he had no means of enforcing his orders. "I can look for no support here, physical or moral," says the chief justice. For reasons that are not to their credit the Europeans living in Samoa declare that barbarous practices must be tolerated until the rebellious natives are wholly crushed; and so they are opposed to any interference with the old Samoan institution of head hunting. The next outbreak in Samoa, therefore, will probably again give evidence of the existence of the abominable practice in an enlarged assortment of human heads.

The strangest of all the protests against its continuance under civilized authority has just been made by Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, the celebrated novelist, who, in a letter sent from Apia, tells of some of the scenes that were recently witnessed there. He says that the government troops, upon returning from the field where they had fought the Matafa's, not only brought with them the heads of rebel warriors, but also those of girls. They marched in procession to Molinuw, carrying the girls' heads which they had taken, and "made of them an oblation

to that melancholy effigy, the king, who sat on the veranda of the government building, offered thanks to the head hunters, and crowned as heroes those who should have been hanged as criminals. The three members of the Anglo-German-American consular triumvirate "unanimously winked" upon the occasion, as they had previously winked at other incidents not less shocking, perpetrated under the responsibility of the protecting powers—England, Germany and the United States. When the girls' heads were brought in Mr. Stevenson went to the British consul, Mr. Cusack-Smith, and pressed him to take some action, yet he only drafted a protest, which was put under a paper weight, where it lay until the savage ceremony was ended. He then spoke without any good result to some of the fighting men who had taken heads, and some of whom had contented themselves with taking only the ears of their dead victims, as trophies. He next conferred with the American chief justice, who, however, as has already been said, was powerless. "I must not wonder, though I may still deplore, that Mr. Ide accepted the situation." It is but fair to say, however, that since Mr. Ide took office he seems to have done all he could to prevent head hunting. It is the governments under whose authority he holds his place that refuse to give him the power to put a stop to it. The old king, Mataafa, who was dethroned and has been sent into banishment by the protectorate, forbade the taking of heads in war; but the king who now rules by the grace of the protectorate, is devoid of squeamishness in regard to it, and even this year has shown himself ready to accept an oblation of girls' heads.

Mr. Stevenson declares that many horrible atrocities have been perpetrated during the last campaign against the followers of Mataafa. He tells the "story of Manono," where the aged Mataafa flung himself on his knees before a British captain and implored protection for his women and children. Very soon afterward at the time of nightfall, flames were observed to rise from the island. There was disorder all through the night; the houses were burned, the women stripped naked, the food trees hewn down, the animals killed, and a great part of the island was reduced to ruin. He tells of other outrages not less atrocious in the province of Ananua elsewhere, all perpetrated under the responsibility of the triple protectorate.

The Superstitious People of Calcutta.

The grossest superstition exists in Calcutta. Recently an Indian had a live goat flung down from his two-story house in accordance with the directions of a so-called magician, who was called in to cast out a devil with which a son was supposed to be possessed. The poor brute was first fed with a few bamboo leaves over which the wizard mumbled some mantras and it was then pushed over the terrace. The animal was killed and its flesh was distributed to the poor.

MUSIC, ART AND LITERATURE.

WAGNER has been more written about than any other composer that ever existed.

POPULAR tales are never put in print among Mohammedans, as the reading of romances is forbidden by the Koran.

A "SOCIETY of Women Journalists" has just been formed with an office near the Strand, London. A register of women journalists seeking employment will be kept there.

It is related of Liszt that if he accidentally struck a wrong note he did not take the trouble to correct it, but made it sound all right by slightly altering the harmony.

CAROLINA BRUSE and Agnes Kjellberg, two Swedish ladies, have received honorable mention at the Paris salon for sculpture. The latter holds the scholarship of the Swedish academy.

OF Richard Henry Stoddard it is said that he has read every important book printed in English for the last forty years, but he still prizes most highly the wards of Hawthorne.

THE WORLD OF LETTERS.

THERE are no servants in the Tolstol household. The count cuts his own firewood, while the countess prepares their simple meals.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL is under contract with a Paris journal to write four articles for its columns during his journey around the world.

THE mother of Bret Harte was a handsome factory girl. Her husband educated her, and she became one of the most cultured women in Detroit.

THE rage for lists of the "most popular" books has struck Norway, and it appears that Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" stands easily first. Among foreign authors Charles Dickens seems to occupy the first place in the affections of the Norwegian public.

TOLD OVER THE BACK FENCE.

A WOMAN living in Trenton, Mo., is described as "an amorous, athletic amazon, agile as a catamount and fierce as a tigress."

A NEBRASKA paper missed publication one day lately on account of the editor's wife, who did the typesetting, being away on a visit.

TO BE beautiful a woman must have sweet looks, sweet speech, sweet smiles, sweet voice, lovely eyes, a comely head and a graceful figure. That is what Walter Besant says.

AN Elmira lady recently agreed to shave her husband ten times for a dollar, the proceeds to be given to her church. The husband thinks that a church ought not to raise money by inflicting cruel and unusual punishment.

INVENTIVE GENIUSES.

A FOLDING baby-carriage has been invented. When closed, it can easily be carried in one hand.

A MONEY sieve has been invented by a Brooklyn deacon. It sorts the pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters taken at the church collections.